GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:205
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2005
IMPACT OF QUARRYING ACTIVITIES ON ENVIRONMENT
Badiga Shri Ramakrishna

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether quarrying activities are causing damage to the environment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the case studies done by the Government thereon so far along with the outcome thereof; and

(d) the manner in which the Government is tackling/proposes to tackle the environmental damage caused by such activities?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 205 REGARDING "IMPACT OF QUARRYING ACTIVITIES ON ENVIRONMENT" ASKED BY SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA DUE FOR ANSWER ON 8.8.2005.

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Quarrying activities are known to have environmental impacts in terms of
(i) degradation of land and change of land use,
(ii) depletion of ground water resources,
(iii) pollution of ground water and surface water,
(iv) damage to flora and fauna,
(v) pollution of air including noise,
(vi) socio-economic impacts including health,
(vii) change of drainage pattern etc.

(c) A few studies have been undertaken by various organizations on different aspects of mining which inter-alia include:

(i) A study on small scale marble mining at Jhiri in Alwar District, Rajasthan by M/s. Ecomen Consultants Pvt. Ltd., Lucknow, sponsored by Ministry of Environment & Forests in 1995. The study assessed the environmental status of the Jhiri area and ascertained the impact of small scale marble mining activity on socio cultural, economic and environmental conditions of the area.

(ii) Study of environmental problems of Aravali Hills and preparation of action plan for restoration of environmental quality in Gurgaon District of Haryana by Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Limited (CMPDIL) at the instance of Central Pollution Control Board in 2003. The study has been completed and the action plan prepared.

(iii) Regional Environmental Impact Assessment for mining operations in Bellary-Hospet Region in Karnataka by National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) at the instance of Government of Karnataka in 2004. A number of recommendations to remedy / improve the environment have been made.

(d) Prior environmental clearance is mandatory in the case of projects involving mining of major minerals with lease area of more than 5 ha. The proponents are required to undertake an environmental impact assessment study along with environmental management plan and undergo public hearing for eliciting public concerns. Based on the outcome of above appraisal, environmental clearance is granted by stipulating environmental safeguards.